

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A longitudinally extending intrafocal plate for securing bone fractures, said intrafocal plate ~~comprising an~~ consisting of a flat, elongated intrafocal plate element having a surface at one end thereof defining a top and a bottom and a leading end and a trailing end and sized to overlay a fracture site, and having a longitudinally extending intrafocal resilient body element secured with the intrafocal plate element adjacent to but spaced apart from the trailing end of the surface of the plate element so that the leading end of the surface of the plate element extends above the location at which the resilient body element is secured to the surface of the plate element and so as to define an overhanging heel between the location at which the resilient body element is secured to the surface of the plate element and the trailing end of the surface, the overhanging heel extending downwardly below the location at which the resilient body element is secured to the surface of the plate element, wherein the heel serves to help stabilize the fracture site, the resilient body element being formed so as to extend generally in ~~in~~ a lengthwise direction of the surface and wherein the other end of the resilient body element defines a pin element.

2. (Previously Presented) An intrafocal plate according to claim 1, wherein a shoulder is defined between the surface and the one end of the body element connected thereto.

3. (Previously Presented) An intrafocal plate according to claim 1, wherein the longitudinally extending resilient body element depends downwardly and outwardly from the bottom of the surface.

4. (Previously Presented) An intrafocal plate according to claim 1, wherein the surface defines one or more apertures therein.

5. (Currently Amended) An intrafocal plate for securing bone fractures, said intrafocal plate ~~comprising an~~ consisting of a flat, elongated intrafocal plate element having a surface at one end thereof defining a top and a bottom and a leading end and a trailing end and sized to overlay a fracture site, and having a longitudinally extending intrafocal resilient body element integral to the surface adjacent to but spaced apart from the trailing end of the surface of the plate element so that the leading end of the surface of the plate element extends above the location at which the resilient body element is integral to the surface of the plate element and so as to define an overhanging heel between the location at which the resilient body element is integral to the surface of the plate element and the trailing end of the surface, the overhanging heel extending downwardly below the location at which the resilient body element is integral to the surface of the plate element wherein the heel serves to help stabilize the fracture site, and the other end of the body element defining a pin, the intrafocal plate including one or more screws for insertion through one or more apertures defined in the surface of the plate element.

6. (Currently Amended) A longitudinally extending intrafocal plate for securing metaphyseal bone fractures, said intrafocal plate ~~comprising an~~ consisting of a flat, elongated intrafocal plate element having a surface at one end thereof with one or more apertures therein and defining a top and a bottom and a leading end and a trailing end and sized to overlay a fracture site, at least two screws extending through the flat, elongated intrafocal plate, and having a longitudinally extending intrafocal resilient body element affixed to and depending from the trailing end of the surface so that the body element forms an acute angle with the surface and extends generally in the lengthwise direction of the surface, the body element being adjacent to but spaced apart from the trailing end of the surface of the plate element so that the leading end of the surface of the plate element extends above the location at which the resilient body element is affixed to the surface of the plate element and so as to define an overhanging heel between the location at which the resilient body element is integral to the surface of the plate element and the trailing end of the surface, the overhanging heel extending

downwardly below the location at which the resilient body element is affixed to the surface of the plate element wherein the heel serves to help stabilize the fracture site, the body element defining a shoulder at one end at the juncture of the body element and the surface and a pin at the other end of the body element.

7.-20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) An intrafocal plate for stabilizing a fracture site comprising:

a plate element having a first end and a second end; and

a body element having a sinuous shape and connected between the first end and the second end of the plate element, wherein the body element has a first portion, a second portion and a third portion, wherein the first portion curves away from the plate element, the second portion curves toward the plate element and the third portion curves away from the plate element;

wherein the second end of the plate element stabilizes the fracture site.

22. (Previously Presented) The intrafocal plate of claim 21, wherein the second end of the plate element prevents over reduction of the fracture site.

23. (Currently Amended) The intrafocal plate of claim 21, wherein the body element ~~has a first portion, a second portion and a third portion, wherein the first portion curves away from the plate element, the second portion curves toward the plate element and the third portion~~ further comprises a fourth portion, wherein the fourth portion curves toward the plate element.

24. (Previously Presented) The intrafocal plate of claim 23, wherein the first portion of the body element forms an acute angle with the trailing end of the elongated plate element.

25. (Previously Presented) The intrafocal plate of claim 21, wherein the second end of the plate element extends adjacent to a portion of the body element and maintains the plate element proximate the fracture site.

26. (Previously Presented) The intrafocal plate of claim 21, wherein the plate element is securable to the fracture site with at least one screw.

27. (New) A method of treating a metaphyseal bone fracture with an intrafocal plate system, the method comprising:

providing an intrafocal plate system comprising a plate element having a leading end and a trailing end and a longitudinally extending resilient body element having a first end and a second end, wherein the first end of the body element is connected to the plate element at a location between the leading end and the trailing end such that the trailing end defines an overhanging heel;

inserting the second end of the body element through a skin incision formed proximate to a metaphyseal bone fracture site and intrafocally inserting the second end of the body element into the fracture site;

manipulating the plate element to lever the fracture into a reduced position; and

pushing the body element into a tubular hollow of the fractured bone such that the second end engages an inside wall surface defining the tubular hollow at a site opposing the fracture site and the overhanging heel overlays the fracture site to stabilize the fracture site.

28. (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising securing the plate element to the bone with a screw.

29. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the body element has a sinuous shape.

30. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein a portion of the body element extends adjacent the trailing end of the plate element.

31. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the overhanging heel prevents over reduction of the fracture site.

32. (New) A method of securing metaphyseal bone fractures using an intrafocal plate, the method comprising:

providing an intrafocal plate comprising an elongated plate element having at least one aperture and defining a leading end and a trailing end, a longitudinally extending body element connected to the elongated plate, and an overhanging heel formed between the location at which the body element is connected to the elongated plate element and the trailing end of the elongated plate element;

inserting a first end of the body element through a skin incision formed proximate to a metaphyseal bone fracture site;

intrafocally inserting a portion of the body element into the fracture site;

manipulating the plate element to lever the fracture into a reduced position; and

pushing the body element into a tubular hollow of the fractured bone such that the overhanging heel overlays the fracture site to prevent over reduction of the fracture site.

33. (New) The method of claim 32, further comprising securing the plate element to the bone with a screw.

34. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the body element has a sinuous shape.

35. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein a portion of the body element extends adjacent the trailing end of the plate element.

36. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein the overhanging heel stabilizes the fracture site.